GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1312
ANSWERED ON:07.12.2015
Research Grants by UGC
Chandrakasi Shri M.

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the terms and reference of the five-member committee appointed by the Government to review the research grants offered by the University Grants Commission (UGC);

(b) whether the Government has reduced the funds allocated for research activities in institutions and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research labs during the current financial year and if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to revamp the functioning of research laboratories/institutions for their self-generation of funds and towards achieving the desired objectives in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
(SMT. SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a): The Government has appointed a Committee on 28th October, 2015, under the Chairpersonship of Prof. Gautam Barua, former Director, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati to go into the issues related to the research fellowships provided by the UGC, covering both National Eligibility Test (NET) fellowships and Non-NET fellowship. The terms and reference of the five-member committee appointed by the Government to review the research grants offered by the University Grants Commission (UGC) are as follows:
(i) Determining the feasibility of enhancing the coverage of NET fellowship, which are merit based
(ii) Establishing a transparent system of transfer of fellowship amounts each month to the Non-NET fellows, which is presently being done on a reimbursement basis, and without the Direct Benefit Transfer mandated by the Government.
(iii) Bringing the benefits and opportunities of the Non-NET fellowship scheme to a larger number of Universities, including State Universities.
(iv) Considering economic and other criteria for eligibility for Non-NET fellowships.
(v) Recommending guidelines for the selection, coverage, award, and administration of the Non-NET fellowship.
Other details of the committee are available at http://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_fils/mhrd/files/ReviewUGCFellowships.pdf.
(b): The Department of Science and Technology (DST) has informed that it has not reduced allocations for its research institutions during the current financial year. However, the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) had a cut in the Plan funds from Rs. 2241 crores to 2154.50 crore during the financial year 2015-16.
(c) & (d): The Ministry has launched IMPacting Research Innovation and Technology (IMPRINT) as a pan- Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) and Indian Institute of Science (IISc) initiative to develop a roadmap for research to solve major engineering and technology challenges in ten technology domains as engineering challenges or goalposts relevant to India. Further, the Ministry has announced an annual investment of Rs. 250 Crores through the Uchchatar Avishkar Yojana in the IITs initially and later in all premier technological institutions funded by Central Government.
The DST has further informed that the autonomous institutions under it are involved in basic research activities to generate scientific knowledge and self-generation of funds by them is not a realistic expectation. However, they are always encouraged to generate some resources by way of consultancy etc. The CSIR has resolved, during the Director's Conference held at Dehradun in June, 2015, to attempt for self-financing of labs.
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